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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Washington, October 20, 1947

Reserve

In order to assist in replying to informational inquiries, the Office of Information has assembled the following facts, applicable as of this date, regarding the world food situation:

FACTS RELATING TO THE WORLD'S FOOD NEEDS
AND UNITED STATES PROGRAMS

World Food Supplies:

Food supplies for the deficit food producing areas of the world will be less during 1947-48 than in 1946-47, according to the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, and may be less than in the drought year of 1945-46. Food crop production in 1947 is slightly above a year earlier, but production in the deficit areas is below a year ago, and food reserves in the surplus producing areas are much below those of 1945-46.

In western Europe, which is the chief deficit food producing area of the world, severe winter freezes caused heavy abandonment of the fall-sown acreage. Only a part of the abandoned acreage could be replanted to spring grains, and these crops were damaged by the summer drought which also dried up pastures and greatly reduced the harvest of hay, potatoes and fodder beets. In the other large deficit food producing area, the Far East, crop prospects are about the same as a year ago. Rice is the important food there, and its production in the surplus producing areas is expected to be much below normal. Supplies available for export may be only about one-third of the 7 to 8 million tons normally exported from this area. Because of a low level of diet in the Far East, the rice shortage must be made up by grains from other parts of the world, if mass starvation is to be averted.

Diets:

The existence of Europeans on diets inadequate in quantity and quality has adversely affected health generally in many countries. This has been reflected by retarded growth, low body weight, high death rates (especially among infants), impaired capacity for work, and an increase in diseases, notably tuberculosis. Children, in the years when rapid growth might otherwise be expected, are seriously under-nourished and mal-nourished. In the food-deficit Far East, there is little opportunity for belt-tightening. Effects are still evident from the serious 1946 famine in China, and the critical food shortages of recent years have affected the health and strength of the people of the South and East Asia, even though their standards of health and nutrition are normally low.

Larger Population--Greater Need

In comparing current estimates of food production and supply with prewar levels, it must be remembered that the population in Europe and other countries has materially increased. The Food and Agriculture Organization, in its State of Food and Agriculture: 1947, states that the world's population has been rising by from 15 to 20 million each year, and that consumer demand for food is everywhere higher than before the war. The State Department estimates the world increase in population in the 10-year period preceding 1946 at 8 percent.

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EUROPEAN CALORIE LEVELS
(Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations Estimates)

| Country | Consumption, Calories per Capita per day 1/ | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Average 1934-38 | Total Population 1946-47 | Non-farm Population 1946-47 |
| | | | |
| Austria | 2850 | 2200 | 1950 |
| Belgium-Luxembourg | 2800 | 2700 | 2650 |
| Denmark | 3200 | 3050 | 2950 |
| France | 2800 | 2500 | 2350 |
| Germany-Bi-zone | 2850 | 2100 | 1850 |
| Greece | 2450 | 2100 | 1950 |
| Italy | 2550 | 2200 | 1950 |
| Netherlands | 2850 | 2650 | 2550 |
| Norway | 2900 | 2700 | 2600 |
| Sweden | 3000 | 2900 | 2850 |
| Switzerland | 3150 | 2800 | 2650 |
| United Kingdom | 3080 | 2900 | 2800 |

1/ Includes allowances for both rationed and unrationed foods.

Minimum Calorie Requirements

An expert nutrition committee convened by FAO just before the Special Meeting on Urgent Food Problems (Washington, May 1946) advised that for:

Minimum subsistence in European countries needed to prevent the most serious undernutrition and the danger of civil unrest 1900 calories per day per capita is required. This is equivalent to about 2000 calories daily at the retail level, but because of inequalities in distribution, the intake of some sections of the population is likely to fall below the danger point if the national average supply of calories per capita is less than 2200 at the retail level. The minimum subsistence level in eastern and tropical countries was set at 1500 to 1600 calories per person per day.

Temporary maintenance in European countries, a daily calorie intake of 2220 calories per person would be required. Here again, unless the national average at the retail level is at least 2500 calories per person per day, the intake is likely to be below 2200 calories for many persons. "Temporary maintenance" is unsatisfactory, but compared with "emergency subsistence" it allows for better growth of children, improvement in general health, and increased output of work. For eastern and tropical countries, the temporary maintenance calorie intake could be somewhat lowered.

The Food and Agriculture Organization's most recent World Food Appraisal, July, 1947, states:

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"For 18 countries of Western and Central Europe which together include 80 percent of the total population outside the Soviet Union, it is estimated that indigenous production will provide about 8 percent less food, measured in calories, than in 1946-47. This reduction represents the equivalent of five to six million tons of grain, and indicates the need for a corresponding increase in imports of grain, or its calorie equivalent in other foods, even to maintain the overall consumption levels of last year in this food deficit region. Present prospects do not indicate that total world exports of grain will increase by so large a quantity.

U.S. Calorie Consumption

After exports, the United States in 1946 had a civilian food supply at the retail level capable of providing an average of 3,400 calories per capita daily, if evenly distributed. This figure does not allow for losses during food preparation and cooking or for plate or other household waste. The average per capita daily requirement based on National Research Council's dietary allowances is placed at about 2,600 calories (actual intake) by the U.S. Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics.

U.S. Supplies of Each Important Grain and Total Supplies, 1946-47, 1947-48 (Millions of bushels)

Source: Cabinet Committee Statement on World Food Programs, September 22, 1947

| | <u>1946-47</u> | <u>1947-48</u> |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Wheat | 1,256 | 1,492 |
| Corn | 3,461 | 2,754 |
| Oats | 1,802 | 1,505 |
| Barley | 327 | 351.5 |
| Grain sorghum | 115.9 | 100 |
| Rye | 22.5 | 28.9 |
| TOTALS | 6,984.4 | 6,231.4 |

Possible U.S. Utilization of 1947-48 Grain Supplies in Millions of Bushels

Source: Cabinet Committee Statement on World Food Programs, September 22, 1947

| | <u>Seed</u> | <u>Food</u> | <u>Feed</u> | <u>Industrial and other</u> | <u>Carry-over</u> | <u>Total domestic</u> | <u>Available for export</u> |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Wheat | 87 | 510 | 350 | -- | 147 | 1,094 | 400 |
| Corn | 13 | 150 | 2,350 | 65 | 174 | 2,752 | 21 |
| Oats | 110 | 50 | 1,150 | -- | 185 | 1,495 | 10 |
| Barley | 19 | 80 | 160 | 10 | 60.5 | 329.5 | .23 |
| Gr. sorg. | 3 | 3 | 67 | 3 | 10 | 86 | 14 |
| Rye | 5 | 7 | 6.3 | 6 | 2.6 | 26.9 | 2 |
| | | | | | | TOTAL | 470 |

"Target" is 100 million bushels higher, to be achieved mainly through conservation of wheat.

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Estimated Food Exports from U.S. by Destination, 1946-47, (Preliminary)
 (In thousands of long tons)

Source: Report to the President by the Cabinet Committee on World Food Programs, July 1, 1947.

| | <u>Europe</u> | <u>Far East</u> | <u>Latin America</u> | <u>Other</u> |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|
| TOTAL | 11,149 | 3,508 | 2,322 | 1,454 |
| Wheat and flour | 6,638 | 1,916 | 1,530 | 436 |
| Other grains | 2,572 | 1,250 | 447 | 269 |
| Fats and oils | 156 | 3 | 58 | 16 |
| Meat carcasses | 195 | 15 | 6 | 8 |
| Dairy products | 322 | 94 | 52 | 25 |
| Other foods | 1,266 | 230 | 229 | 700 |

Of the exports to Europe, shipments for U.S. military and civilian use amounted to 3,481 thousand tons, and of those to the Far East, such shipments amounted to 1,642 thousand tons.

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U.S. Exports in 1946-47 and Exports Availabilities in 1947-48, all Foods

Source: Cabinet Committee Statement on World Food Programs, September 22, 1947

| | 1946-47 | | 1947-48 | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| | Trillion calories | Percent of Total | Trillion calories | Percent of Total |
| Wheat and flour | 31.2 | 62.9 | 32.9 | 71.9 |
| Coarse grains | 12.1 | 24.4 | 4.6 | 10.1 |
| Rice | 1.3 | 2.6 | 1.3 | 2.8 |
| Beans, peas | 0.6 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 1.5 |
| Edible fats, oils, peanuts | 2.0 | 4.1 | 3.0 | 6.6 |
| Dairy Products | 1.3 | 2.6 | 1.7 | 3.7 |
| Dried Fruits | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 1.3 |
| Citrus juices | -- | -- | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Vegetables 1/ | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Meat, poultry prods. and fish | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 1.5 |
| TOTALS | 49.6 | | 45.8 | |

1/ - Vegetables include potatoes.

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U.S. Food Consumption:

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics in the National Food Situation of August 15 gives average per capita U. S. consumption in pounds as follows:

| | <u>1935-39 aver.</u> | <u>1946</u> | <u>1947 preliminary</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Meats | 125.6 | 152.8 | 155 |
| Poultry products, | | | |
| eggs | 37.3 | 46.8 | 47.2 |
| Chickens | 17.9 | 25.3 | 23.7 |
| Total milk equivalent | 801 | 809 | 810 |
| Total fats and oils | 44.7 | 39.5 | 42.5 |
| Corn meal | 22.9 | 17 | 19 |
| Oatmeal | 3.9 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| Barley food products | 1.2 | 1.8 | 1.7 |

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| | <u>1935-39 aver.</u> | <u>1946</u> | <u>1947 preliminary</u> |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Wheat flour | 153.1 | 155.7 | 150 |
| Wheat breakfast food | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.8 |
| Rye flour | 2.2 | 1.9 | 2.0 |
| Milled rice | 5.6 | 4.2 | 5.2 |

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U.S. Supply of concentrated feeds (mainly corn, oats, barley and grain sorghums, plus byproduct and protein feeds) averaged 1.03 per animal unit 1937-41 and ran as follows for years indicated: 1942--1.08; 1943--0.95; 1944--1.07; 1945--1.06; 1946--1.18 (preliminary); and 1947--1.03 (based on indications September 1946). (Figures in tons)

Source: USDA Press Release 2272-47, Secretary Anderson Announces Farm Grain Saving Campaign.

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